

Of Two Minds - When Everything Is Artifice and PR, Collapse Beckons

charles hugh smith : 6-8 minutes

The notion that consequence can be as easily managed as PR is the ultimate artifice and the ultimate delusion.

The consequences of the drip-drip-drip of moral decay is difficult to discern in day-to-day life. It's easy to dismiss the ubiquity of artifice, PR, spin, corruption, racketeering, fraud, collusion and narrative manipulation (a.k.a. propaganda) as nothing more than human nature, but this dismissal of moral decay is nothing more than rationalizing the rot to protect insiders from the sobering reality that the entire system is unraveling and heading for its final reckoning: collapse.

We've become so accustomed to the excesses of marketing that we've lost the ability to recognize the difference between "science" that's been carefully designed to reach a pre-planned conclusion and *science* that accepts the outcome, even if it harms well-funded interests.

The vast expanses of ignorance greatly aid this artifice. Even though high school physics, chemistry and biology are sufficient to tease apart the vast majority of rigged experiments, trials and studies, few Americans have the interest or fortitude to read Phase III trial results, etc. critically, and so the corporate media can trumpet bogus results without fear of exposure: all the statistical tricks and gimmicks are passed off as "science" to the distracted and gullible.

And if someone dares to examine the results critically, then those benefiting from the ignorance make the results "secret" until the year 2929. And that's the entire game in a nutshell: maximizing private gain from artifice, PR, spin, corruption, racketeering, fraud, collusion and narrative manipulation, all masked by an putrid spew of virtue-signaling and PR.

Every institution that was once trustworthy has been debauched to maximize private gain: higher education, science, medicine, national defense--the list includes virtually every sector and industry in America. Nothing can be trusted because somebody behind the scenes is spinning the story and data to mask their self-interest, their immense gains and the carefully contrived structure of diverting investigation and eliminating transparency, competition and accountability.

Our technocratic obsession denies the existence of the moral universe, reducing the world to techno-gimmicks (electric air taxis for everyone!), techno-fantasies (fusion reactors on every corner!) and techno-distractions (which billionaire will be the first on Mars?), as if a nation and society hurtling toward moral, social, civic and economic collapse can be saved by some "innovation" that beneath the surface is nothing more than another profiteering monopoly or cartel.

Many people fear collapse, but quality, service and reliability have already collapsed. The washing machine that two generations ago was designed and built to last 25 years now breaks down after a few years--so sorry, the motherboard failed. That will cost you almost as much as new washer, and so the manufacturer, bank and retailer win because the weary, clueless consumer will do the easy thing and buy a new, expensive appliance on credit. The "old" appliance (brand-new by previous standards) is hauled off to the landfill, the ultimate destination of everything in our *Landfill Economy* of poorly made junk.

Service would be hauled to the landfill as well if it was tangible. Alas, it is simply maddening, as nothing works and Kafkaesque bureaucracies have so much power that they are immune to transparency, competition and accountability. their websites don't work, they botch the most basic transactions and they perpetuate incorrect information, but too bad--there is no recourse.

Big Tech is equally impervious to transparency, competition and accountability. Your "crime" is never explained, and there is no recourse, for the Machine has no judiciary or human contact: you query the Machine knowing full well that you will never extract anything remotely fair or just from its algorithmic monstrosity.

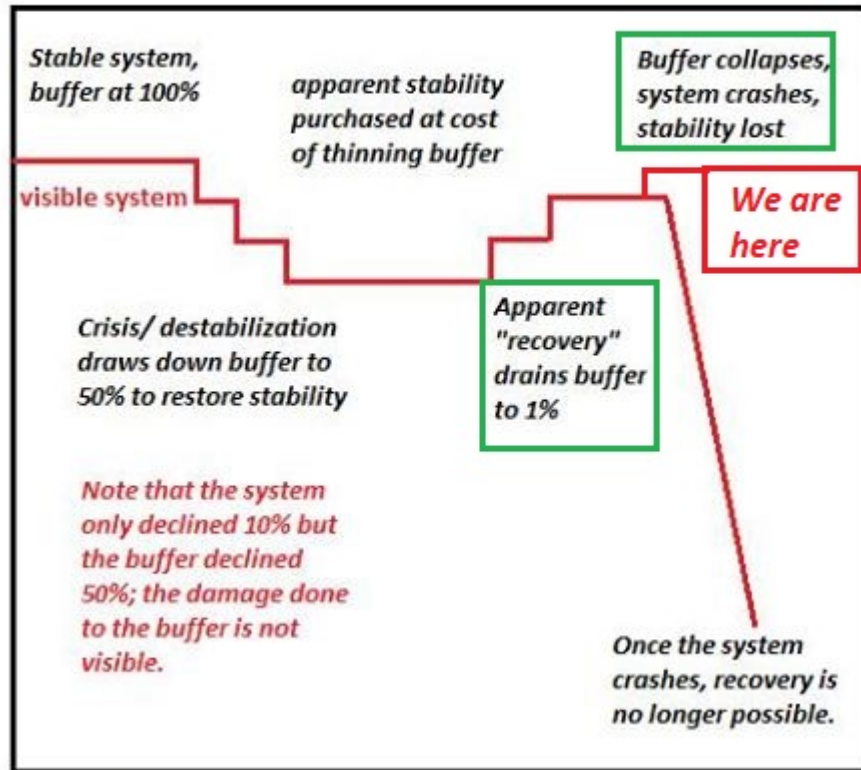
Technology doesn't extinguish moral decay or eliminate the stench of self-serving artifice, PR, spin, corruption, racketeering, fraud, collusion and narrative manipulation. Technology only enhances the potential for profiteering under the tissue-thin guise of "innovation," "technological advance" and the threadbare delusions of a populace that has watched too many contrived narratives in which technology saves the day.

The moral buffers have already thinned; there is nothing left to tap. There is nothing left in what actually matters: social cohesion, moral legitimacy, civic virtue--all stripped, depleted, gone.

Drones and robots won't save us from collapse. Neither will fusion reactors, electric air taxis, billionaires in space, missions to Mars, algae-based meat or any of the other thousand "innovations" those profiting from moral rot promote in the hopes that the banquet of consequences being served can be swept away by more gimmicks, more artifice, more delusions, more fantasies, more PR, more spin and more narrative control.

Collapse can't be gimmicked away. The notion that consequence can be as easily managed as PR is the ultimate artifice and the ultimate delusion.

How Systems Collapse



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